

# Keeping You Posted

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## Local Churches Get Aid in Looking Ahead

Local churches soon will be getting census data showing what their neighborhood was like in 1970 and 1980, what it is like today and a projection of what it will be like in 1991.

Now being distributed free to all local churches by UC Board for Homeland Ministries, the data show population growth and loss by age groups and sex (the latter for 1986 and 1991 only), racial and ethnic background, income and number of households. Neighborhood figures also are compared with national averages. Upon request, churches may receive printouts for the major metropolitan areas in their region.

Such information should make it easier for churches to develop long-range program-

ming and to determine how best to relate to community needs, points out Marjorie H. Royle, UCBHM's secretary for research and evaluation.

In the same packet, churches also will receive figures for 1975, 1980 and 1985 on their membership, average attendance (1983 and 1985 only), church school enrollment, new members, current expenses and benevolences. And they will be able to compare their performance against their conference and denominational averages.

Churches wishing advice on how best to use the census figures should contact Ms. Royle at the Office of Research and Evaluation, UCBHM, 132 W. 31 St., New York, NY 10001, 212-239-8700.

## EXEC COUNCIL ON UCC HEADQUARTERS

### No Site, But New York Out

The headquarters of the UCC will move out of the New York metropolitan area by 1991 or soon thereafter, if General Synod follows the recommendation of the Executive Council.

Citing a lack of minority churches in Missouri and a need to consult all affected bodies about a new headquarters site, the EC also did not accept the location committee's proposal of a move to St. Louis by 1989.

Instead of proposing a specific site, the council worked on a process that would enable all UCC national bodies to carry out their commitment to move to one location.

Members indicated they felt good about not making too hasty a decision. They said they wanted site selection to be carried out in the context of long-term planning for UCC mission, exploration of UCC structure and testing of the feasibility of raising in the church some \$5 million toward the estimated \$16-\$20 million cost of the move.

To conduct further analysis, the council put in place the mechanism for a management team chaired by the UCC president with oversight by a "headquarters steering committee" of 14 composed of EC chairs and others such as the Council for Racial/Ethnic Ministries.

The management team would consist of top national and conference executives. Its duties would be to assess the proposed move's impact on national bodies of the church, develop financial proposals for the move, work out a uniform set of policies on staff transition and provide information necessary for Synod to make informed decisions.

The Executive Council expects decision on a specific site to be postponed until General Synod 17 in 1989.



More than 100 "Freedom Riders" from communities and UCC churches in Virginia, North Carolina and Alabama went "up South" in Feb. with the Commission for Racial Justice to help mobilize Chicago voters. The volunteers were hosted by Plymouth UCC in Louisville and Kenwood, People's, Trinity, First Congregational and Park Manor UCC in Chicago.

Gene Young

## Permanent Women's Structure to Be on June Synod Agenda

A proposal for an independent and permanent UCC women's structure, prepared by the Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society, has been approved by Executive Council and will go to General Synod in June.

The Executive Council also endorsed the recommended \$356,000 1988 budget and \$400,000 1989 budget for the new structure.

A final draft of the proposal developed at CCW's annual meeting, Feb. 20-23, directs the UCC president to convene a 20-member transition team (including 15 of a 27-member directorate), appoint a transitional director and set up the permanent structure.

The team will set up CCW's first "Biennial Assembly," a new feature focused on education and networking. The assembly will consist of three representatives chosen by each conference, as well as two each from various UCC interest groups and from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

An alternative proposal has been voted by the Nebraska Conference board of directors. It calls upon the Office for Church Life and Leadership and Office for Church in Society each to create a staff position to address issues related to women.

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## Re-enacting the Resurrection

By David Keller

Recently I received my copy of our new *Book of Worship*. The service titled "The Great Vigil of Easter" intrigued me and became the first one I read. As I let the rich imagery embrace me, I entered a spirit of worship. I felt myself venturing near the central mystery of our faith, the raising of Jesus Christ. It is powerful liturgy which I would love to celebrate in community.

God's plan permitted no witnesses to the supreme act of salvation. With Mary, Cleopas and Peter, we see only the results of that deed: the empty tomb, the risen Christ and the Church, his continuing life in the world. Yet something in us yearns to touch that moment when life overcame death. So on Easter eve in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Greek Archbishop of Jerusalem will once again receive the Holy Fire from inside the darkened tomb. In that night's darkness, millions of Christians will hold vigil, re-enacting the Easter triumph with fire, word, water, bread and wine. As dawn breaks, millions more will gather on cross-crowned hills,

in cemeteries and sanctuaries, for a simple sunrise celebration. My most compelling memory of Easter is that of a teenage girl entering a darkened, anxious, prelude-less sanctuary, snapping a black cloth off the cross, and as the lights came on, boldly announcing, "Christ is risen!" A member of that church told me, "I always felt I arrived too late when I came to church on Easter—the big event had already happened. But this time, I felt like I saw Christ rise when that cloth came off."

Thank God something in us still seeks union with mystery, still wants to be present when Life asserts itself. We so easily lapse into rational religion, a realm where management and programming define the nature of our shared life. Our primary concern with worship too quickly slips from allowing it to draw us into the place of God, to making sure everything runs smoothly and stays within the proper time. We need to boldly reaffirm that the great longing of our souls which moves us to worship is not to achieve efficiency, but

to enter mystery. Not just on Easter, but every time we worship, we ought to be seeking to participate in Jesus Christ's resurrection.

"You have been raised with Christ . . . you have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator" (Col. 3). No one was present when God raised Jesus, but our graceful God seeks to raise each one of us with him. There are two tenses which describe the receiving of this risen life: one past, one present perfect. We "have been raised"; we who are members of Christ's body can testify to having already accepted God's gift of new life in Christ. But our new self "is being renewed"; we are continually becoming the Easter people God intends us to be. It is in this process that Easter's liturgical re-enactments find validity and purpose. It may be we venture no closer to the raising of Jesus than to dramatize it liturgically. But if our worship invites our surrender to God's renewing grace, it is the kind of worship God wants us to offer. It is the kind of worship where we find for ourselves the risen Christ indeed "is all, and in all."

*David Keller is pastor of Memorial UCC in Lexington, NC.*

## Priorities Report

### Youth/Young Adult Ministries

After work one Friday in Feb., more than 40 young adults stopped by Susan and Stephen Fitts' home for an informal time of refreshments and conversation on FAITH UNITED CHURCH's "young adult night" in Springfield, MA. "There's a growing group of us in our 20's and 30's, and now we hope to get together perhaps five times a year, Sept. to June, at someone's home," says Susan, head of the church's Christian education board.

### Spiritual Renewal

A pilot program of the MICHIGAN CONFERENCE Spiritual Renewal Network and OFFICE FOR CHURCH LIFE AND LEADERSHIP teaches people spiritual disciplines (Bible study, silence, journal-writing, prayer) at group retreats; they continue as partners locally. Eleanor Morrison, pastor of FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, Portland, MI, says it helps folks who "are not essentially contemplative activists" to link spirituality and action.

### Justice and Peace

With part of its Just Peace Offering, PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL UCC, Chattanooga, TN, sponsors a weekly program of commentary on a local public radio station. Produced by the Stanley Foundation, Muscatine, IA, "Common Ground" has addressed such world affairs as terrorism,

Nicaragua's Contras and nuclear arms. "It presents issues from a viewpoint that is more socially aware and concerned than the ones we often hear in this area," says Pilgrim pastor David Beebe.

### Family Life



Minneapolis Star and Tribune

Prompted by concerns raised in a parenting class, FALCON HEIGHTS UCC, St. Paul, MN, recently opened a lending library of toys and games that involve children in nonaggressive, nonviolent play and encourage them to work together toward common goals, says Dixie Hull, the church's Christian education director. It also has books about the importance of children's play time.

## OPPOSING VIEW

*William H. Jordan, pastor of First UCC, Austintown, OH, says:*

Max Hale raises the issue ("The World Sets the Agenda," Feb. KYP "Theology Forum"), but I cannot accept his premise. Throughout the scriptures, the "world" was always attempting to "set the agenda" for the people of God. Yet ancient Israel's prophets declared that neither Pharaoh nor Baal were to run the meeting, but only God. Centuries later, Jesus' proclamation of the reign of God made it clear that the world's agenda was already passing away, the only true agenda being the will of God.

A church which lets the world set the agenda for it is ever-destined to be both limited and reactive. The "agenda-setter" not only controls what may, and may not, be said, but sends us scurrying after one false "strawberry" after another until we are too tired to worry about the "old business" of God's redemptive act in Jesus Christ.

Certainly our mission as Christians is, as Hale puts it, "to make truth dependable and love routine"; but that will come to fruit only if and when the church defines "truth" and "love" in light of God's agenda and not the world's.

## OBITUARY

AGNES K. SCOTT, 95, retired teacher and UC Board for World Ministries missionary to China for more than 30 years, died Jan. 1 in Claremont, CA. While overseas, she taught music at Fukien Christian University.

# Fortune and McCall Honored

Marie M. Fortune of Seattle and Barbara Warren McCall of Claremont, CA, are recipients of the 1987 Antoinette Brown Awards from the UCC's Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society.

Named for the first ordained woman minister in the U.S., the award goes biennially to two outstanding UCC woman ministers.

## New Clergy-Crisis Resources Coming

A new packet to help local pastors find help and resources during crises will go out to UCC conference offices this summer.

Produced by the Clergy in Crisis Response Implementation Team, the packet will be an update of the *Clergy in Crisis Resource Folio* already on file at conferences.

Like the original 1985 version, the new one will list resources ranging from books to facilities such as alcohol counseling centers for pastors, says Office for Church Life and Leadership associate Robert Naylor.

Among the new listings will be four pamphlets, due out by year's end, offering tips for the graduating seminarian and for the pastor seeking a new position, planning for retirement or trying to keep vitality in a current ministry.

## Disabilities Group Revises Guidelines

The UCC National Committee on Persons with Disabilities will issue new guidelines, effective July 1, to determine when a church is accessible to disabled persons.

The new guidelines, "Pray With Us Now," give greater weight to sensory and mental as well as mobility disabilities in ranking church accessibility. A mix of hymnals in large print for the visually-impaired, amplification systems for the hearing-impaired and the use of pictorial symbols for the mentally-retarded, along with ramps and curb cuts, are stressed in making a church accessible. Inclusive language, advocacy and wholistic education also are included.

To obtain the guidelines, write Disabilities Consultant, UC Board for Homeland Ministries, 132 W. 31 St., New York, NY 10001.

SEND NEWS stories, PHOTOS and OPPOSING VIEWS of 100 words or less to political or social stands taken in a particular article to KYP, Office of Communication, UCC, 105 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016.

Ms. Fortune, ordained in 1976, has been a local church pastor, has written books on family and sexual violence and is founder and director of Seattle's Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence.



Ms. McCall, ordained in 1938 and now retired, was a pastoral counselor, assistant for women's concerns to former UCC president Robert Moss and the first UCC editor of *A.D.* magazine.

## UCC Not Consulted On Rivertree Materials

"Contrary to misleading promotion, the Christian education materials distributed by Rivertree Christian Ministries were not developed in conjunction with any agency of the United Church of Christ," reports Ansley Coe Throckmorton, general secretary of UC Board for Homeland Ministries' division of education and publication.

In advertisements, one line of the curriculum is described as being "for use in United Church of Christ congregations" and as presenting "the distinctive characteristics, structure, and heritage" of the UCC.

## Seminarian's Work Frees Wrongly-Held Prisoners

Leaving behind his job, suburban home and Lincoln Continental at age 37, James C. McCloskey entered Princeton (NJ) Theological Seminary and became a volunteer prison chaplain in his second year. Since then, his work has led the courts to release four wrongly-convicted New Jersey prisoners.

Now in care of the New Jersey Association while studying and looking to UCC ordination, Mr. McCloskey is the founder and one-man staff of Centurion Ministries in Princeton, dedicated to seeking justice for innocent prisoners.

## AIDS Pronouncement Proposed

Major proposals concerning churchwide work around AIDS will be considered by General Synod 16 in June. The pronouncement and proposal for action are being submitted by UC Board for Homeland Ministries. They were developed with the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries.

The proposals urge the development of care-giving ministries, which could range from seeing that persons with AIDS have housing to spending time with them to helping family members understand their situation. UCC congregations and conferences also are asked to provide education on AIDS pre-

## Homeland Board Beefs Up Church Fundraising Help

With two new staff members, UC Board for Homeland Ministries says it now can handle double the number of local church requests for help in capital gifts campaigns.

Local Church Financial Advisory Services assists churches in raising money for site acquisition, construction or renovation. Elected as secretaries were Beatrice H. Starrett, Salina, KS, administrative coordinator with CUE Mid-America Seminaries, believed to be the first woman in this kind of mainline denominational fundraising post, and William VanderWyden, pastor of Congregational UCC, Amherst, OH. Each secretary makes three visits to the churches aided, spending 9-10 days at a time over a six-month period.

Interested churches should write to Local Church Financial Advisory Services, UCBHM, 132 W. 31 St., New York, NY 10001.

## UCC Action Urged On Student Aid Cuts

A joint congressional committee will vote this month on student aid cuts that could force thousands from college, says Joseph McMillan, UC Board for Homeland Ministries' higher education relations secretary.

Cuts proposed in the President's fiscal 1988 budget would make a million undergraduates ineligible for the need-based Pell Grant program, to be reduced from \$3.9 to \$2.7 billion. About 720,000 poor students would be ineligible for Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, while another 200,000 would no longer get Guaranteed Student Loans. College Work-Study and National Direct Student Loans programs would end.

Mr. McMillan urges telegrams to Budget Committee chairs Rep. William Gray, House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515 and Sen. Lawton Chiles, Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510 and calls to 202-224-3121.

vention, defend the right to privacy of those with AIDS and help eradicate fear and discrimination against persons with AIDS.

Just as Jesus in his life and ministry risked the condemnation of society in order to embody God's love among the ill and isolated, so the UCC is called upon to respond to persons with AIDS and their families with love, advocacy and nonjudgmental pastoral care, the pronouncement explains.

The denomination's Office for Church in Society and Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society also have voted support for the AIDS proposals.

## RECOMMENDED

CHRISTIAN IDENTITY MOVEMENT, a 40-page National Council of Churches booklet, examines the history and beliefs of the movement and how its leaders distort biblical references to justify racist and anti-semitic actions—including paramilitary attacks. Author Leonard Zeskind notes areas where Identity and fundamentalist theology merge, explaining why some Christians are vulnerable to the far right. \$3 from Center for Democratic Renewal, Box 10500, Atlanta, GA 30310.

## JOB OPPORTUNITY

ASSOCIATION MINISTER is sought by the 122-church Eastern Ohio Association, headquartered in Canton. Responsibilities include administration, pastoral care and placement plus participation on Ohio Conference staff. UCC ordination required. Apply by June 1 to Search Committee chair John Bertch, 2560 Clearview Ave. NW, Canton, OH 44718.

## SOUTH AFRICA DIVESTMENT

### World Board Wants Tighter Criteria

UC Board for World Ministries' board of directors, meeting in Tampa last month, voted to urge General Synod to tighten its criteria for determining whether firms have major South African operations.

Also, the board elected Daniel Romero general secretary of mission program, effective in July. He has been Southern California Conference associate minister since 1976.

On divestment, board members extended the definition of firms to be divested to include those with franchise, licensing or management agreements with entities in South Africa and Namibia. Some U.S. firms that claim they have halted South Africa business continue to market their products there via intricate licensing and franchise agreements. Financial institutions without

# Homeland Board Probes Way New Churches Are Founded

UC Board for Homeland Ministries is taking a "think big" approach to new church starts.

At the Feb. annual pastors' training institute for new churches, Robert Burt, general secretary of UCBHM's division of evangelism and local church development, said that starts should begin with 10 acres, rather than five, and should focus on providing worship space for 600 to 700 people. UCBHM is doing research on how to provide 15,000 square feet for \$450,000, he told 35 ministers attending the meeting held in Church of the Beatitudes, Phoenix.

A church founded today should have about 900 members by 2000 A.D., he feels. To help make it happen, he added, the organizing pastor should be ready to stay 10-15 years.

Mr. Burt admitted that the stakes are

high and the denomination will need major funds to fulfill a "vision" of significant gains in membership. But, he said, "we cannot afford financially or spiritually to be satisfied with small, cozy congregations."

John Krueger, who organized Peacemaker UCC, Ft. Wayne, IN, in 1977, stressed tithing by pastor and members as a stewardship base for a healthy church. "Stewardship is a faith issue," he declared, "not a money issue."

To win new members, the new churches' pastors recommended that clergy demonstrate care for every single person who visits the church, including a home visit within two days; involve members in planning and conducting worship; find out early what an individual's particular needs are, and be visible and available in the community.

## UC Scene

Trustees of United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, New Brighton, MN, have appointed BENJAMIN GRIFFIN president, effective July 1. He has served as senior pastor of Trinity UCC, York, PA, since 1975.

UCC-founded AMISTAD RESEARCH CENTER, one of the largest primary source collections on U.S. minorities' history, has moved to Tulane University in New Orleans.

## UPCOMING EVENT

A conference for persons considering ordained ministry will be held at Bangor Theological Seminary May 1-2. Sessions on the meaning of a theological education, field study and financial aid will be offered. Meals and housing are free. Contact Bangor Theological Seminary, 300 Union St., Bangor, ME 04401, 207-942-6781.



Jim Owen

(L-R) UCC president Avery D. Post, National Council of Churches general secretary Arie Brouwer and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) president John Humbert led about 300 worshipers in prayer on Ash Wednesday as part of the Lenten witness for justice and peace in Central America held in Washington, DC. The all-church Pentecost Peace Offering, set for June 7, helps local church, conference and national UCC bodies' peace ministries.

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